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NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Provisional agenda

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10. Natural disaster reduction:
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(b) Hazard-resistant structures;

(c) Effects of disasters on modern societies;

(d) Interrelationships between technological and natural hazards;

(e) Economic aspects of disaster reduction for sustainable development;

(f) Warning systems;

(g) Drought management.

11. Outcome of the Conference, including a plan of action for natural disaster reduction.

12. Adoption of the report of the Conference.

Annotations

1. Opening of the Conference

The Conference will be convened at the Pacific Convention Plaza, Yokohama, Japan, 23 May 1994, at 9 a.m.

2. Election of the President

Rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference (A/CONF.172/2) provides that the Conference shall elect a President from among the representatives of participating States. Rule 44 provides that all elections shall be held by secret ballot, unless the Conference decides otherwise.

3. Adoption of the rules of procedure

In its decision 2 of 18 March, the Preparatory Committee for the Conference decided to recommend to the Conference the adoption of the provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.172/2).

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.172/2)

4. Adoption of the agenda

In its decision 4 of 18 March, the Preparatory Committee decided to recommend to the Conference the adoption of the provisional agenda set out in the present document.

5. Election of officers other than the President

Under rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Conference shall elect, in addition to the President, 25 Vice-Presidents, one of whom shall also serve as Rapporteur-Général. Those officers shall be elected on the basis of ensuring the representative character of the General Committee. In addition, the Conference shall have the following four Vice-Presidents ex officio: the Chairmen of the Special High-level Council and of the Scientific and Technical Committee of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Chairman of the Preparatory Group of the Scientific and Technical Committee for the Conference, and "the father" of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, Mr. Frank Press. The Conference may also elect such other officers as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.

6. Organization of work, including the establishment of committees

In its resolution 48/188 of 21 December 1993, the General Assembly decided that the Conference should take place from 23 to 27 May 1994.

Rule 46 of the provisional rules of procedure provides that the Conference may establish a Main Committee, as required, which may set up subcommittees or working groups. Under rule 48, the Conference may establish, in addition to the Main Committee, technical committees and such other committees and working groups as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions. According to rule 49, the members of the committees and working groups of the Conference shall be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Conference, unless the Conference decides otherwise. Under the same rule, members of the subcommittees and working groups shall be appointed by the Chairman of the committee in question, subject to the approval of that committee, unless the committee decides otherwise.

The provisional rules of procedure also provide for the appointment of a Credentials Committee (rule 4) and a General Committee (rule 11).

A note by the Secretary-General on organizational and procedural matters will be before the Conference for consideration. It will include a proposed timetable for the work of the Conference.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General on organizational and procedural matters (A/CONF.172/3)

7. Credentials of representatives to the Conference:

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

Rule 4 of the provisional rules of procedure provides that a Credentials Committee of nine members shall be appointed at the beginning of the Conference and that its composition shall be based on that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its most recent session. At the forty-eighth session of the Assembly, the Credentials Committee consisted of

representatives of the following States: Austria, Bahamas, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Mauritius, Russian Federation, Thailand and United States of America.

(b) Report of the Credentials Committee

In accordance with rule 4, the Credentials Committee shall examine the credentials of representatives and report to the Conference without delay.

8. Activities for natural disaster reduction

The Plenary of the Conference will hold a general debate between 23 and 25 May. The list of speakers for the general debate will be closed at 6 p.m. on 24 May.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

9. Programmes and policies of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction:

(a) Regional reports

(b) Public- and private-sector interface

By paragraph 6 of its resolution 48/188, the General Assembly decided that the Conference would have the following objectives:

(a) To review the accomplishments of the Decade at the national, regional and international levels;

(b) To chart a programme of action for the future;

(c) To exchange information on the implementation of Decade programmes and policies;

(d) To increase awareness of the importance of disaster-reduction policies.

In paragraph 11 of its resolution 48/188, the General Assembly called upon all Governments to take an active part in the Conference and its preparatory process, in particular, by (a) undertaking systematic assessments of national and local hazards and risks, with the assistance of the intersectoral national committees for the Decade, (b) organizing multidisciplinary national and regional conferences and technical meetings, so as to ensure that the entire potential of each country, both at the national level and within the context of regional cooperation, including its scientific and technical capability, is fully utilized in disaster reduction, and (c) preparing comprehensive reports on progress achieved and plans for further action to be presented at the Conference.

In preparation for the Conference, a number of regional and related meetings have been held. The reports on those meetings will be before the World Conference for its information.

As a means of increasing awareness of the importance of disaster-reduction policies, and bearing in mind the request of the Assembly in paragraph 10 of its resolution 48/188 that the Secretary-General invite to the Conference, among others, scientific associations, relevant non-governmental organizations and the private sector, arrangements have been made for a public- and private-sector interface.

Documentation

Regional reports: programmes and summaries of presentations

Public- and private-sector interface: programmes and summaries of presentations

Document for information

Reports on regional preparations

10. Natural disaster reduction:

(a) Vulnerable communities

(b) Hazard-resistant structures

(c) Effects of disasters on modern societies

(d) Interrelationships between technological and natural hazards

(e) Economic aspects of disaster reduction for sustainable development

(f) Warning systems

(g) Drought management

At its session held at Geneva, from 14 to 18 March 1994, the Preparatory Committee for the Conference decided that a number of technical committees should be established at the Conference with the objective of allowing an expanded review and analysis of specific topics particularly relevant to disaster reduction. One technical committee each will consider the seven sub-items listed above. The Conference will have before it the programme for each committee as well as summaries of the presentations by disaster management authorities, well known scientists and leading international and national experts on mitigation of the effects of disasters, which will be issued as a series of addenda to the programmes of work.

Documentation

Technical committees: programmes and summaries of presentations

11. Outcome of the Conference, including a plan of action for natural disaster reduction

At its session, the Preparatory Committee for the Conference had before it an informal paper entitled "Outline of a draft final document of the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, containing proposals for a plan of action". After the paper was orally amended, the Committee, in its decision 6 of 18 March, decided to authorize the members of the extended Bureau of the Committee, with the assistance of the secretariat of the Decade, to hold informal consultations on the text before the opening of the Conference. The Conference will have before it, for consideration, the draft final outcome of the Conference resulting from those consultations.

Documentation

Draft final outcome of the Conference

Report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.172/PC/3)

12. Adoption of the report of the Conference

The draft report will be prepared by the Rapporteur-Général of the Conference and presented to the Conference for its approval. It will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1994, in the context of the mid-term review of the implementation of the International Framework for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/236, and to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session.